

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 04166

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, MX
SUBJECT: HEALTH OF MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL FLORES

1. DEPARTMENT PASS JUSTICE FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL BELL.
DURING A PRIVATE TALK WITH OSCAR FLORES ON MARCH 8, I
INQUIRED AS TO THE POSSIBILITY OF RE-SCHEDULING VISIT OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL BELL. HE TOLD ME THAT HE EXPECTED TO
ENTER THE HOSPITAL IN HOUSTON WITHIN NEAR FUTURE, WHERE
HE ANTICIPATED A BYPASS HEART OPERATION MIGHT BE PER-
FORMED. BOTH DURING OUR LENGTHY SESSION, IN WHICH DEA
ADMINISTRATOR BENSINGER AND OTHERS PARTICIPATED, AND
AFTERWARDS IN PRIVATE, I GAINED IMPRESSION THAT PHYSICALLY
FLORES IS IN POOR STATE, ALTHOUGH HIS ENTHUSIASM FOR HIS
JOB REMAINS HIGH, AS DOES HIS MENTAL CLARITY AND HIS
ABILITY TO CONTROL HIS SECRETARIAT AND MAKE DECISIONS.
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FLORES OF TODAY AND THE MAN OF
A MONTH AND A HALF AGO IS THE EFFORT THAT HE MUST
EXPEND.

2. FOREIGN SECRETARY ROEL TOLD ME MARCH 9 THAT HE HAD
"KNOWN ALL ALONG THAT FLORES' PROBLEM WAS A CARDIAC CON-
DITION", BUT THAT OUT OF RESPECT FOR FLORES' WISHES, HE
HAD NOT BEEN IN A POSITION TO REVEAL THE FACT. HE TOLD
ME THAT HE THOUGHT WE WOULD BE SEEING A REPLACEMENT FOR
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FLORES AS AG FAIRLY SOON.

3. I AGREE WE SHOULD WATCH AND AWAIT RESULTS OF FLORES'
VISI TO HOUSON. SHOULD HIS HEALTH REQUIRE THAT HE
STEP DOWN, IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO ARRANGE A MEETING
WITH HIS SUCCESSOR EARLY IN HIS PERIOD OF TENANCY, EITHER
THROUGH A VISIT BY ATTORNEY GENERAL BELL TO MEXICO CITY,

OR THROUGH AN INVITATION TO THE SUCCESSOR TO COME TO
WASHINGTON.

4. WOULD APPRECIATE ADDRESSEES TREATING THIS INFORMATION
IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE. LUCEY

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